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Jyotiraditya Scindia

SCINDIA POWER EVIDENT IN MP AS LOYALISTS ENTER MINISTRY

Nine more supporters of former Congress leader Jyotiraditya Scindia joined Shivraj Chouhan's government on Thursday

TIGER ABHI ZINDA HAI, SAYS JYOTIRADITYA

In all, 28 new ministers, including 20 of cabinet rank, were inducted into Chief Minister Shivraj Chauhan's ministry. Apart from the nine Scindia loyalists, three other ex-Congress leaders have also been given berths. Two from Scindia camp had joined the cabinet in April. Reacting to Congress barbs on his insignificance, Scindia retorted, 'Tiger Abhi Zinda Hai'

CHAUHAN'S EYES ON LOOMING BY-POLLS

- The cabinet expansion comes ahead of the crucial by-polls in MP. The Scindia camp has big influence in Gwalior-Chambal divisions, which has 16 of the 24 seats to which polling would be held
- A strong performance is crucial for the BJP, which has 107 MLAs in the 230-member House whose current strength is 206

14
OF 34 MEMBERS IN CHAUHAN'S MINISTRY HAVE CONGRESS ROOTS

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KARNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Nod to shop for Sukhois, MiGs

Amid LAC stand-off, Defence Acquisition Council gives its approval to high-value capital acquisition of various platforms and equipment; delivery to take at least two-three years

MAYANK SINGH @New Delhi

AMID the tense stand-off along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) on Thursday gave its approval to high-value capital acquisition of various platforms and equipment. While the total value of the proposals approved was ₹38,900 crore, those sourced from the Indian industry would cost ₹31,130 crore, underlining the strong indigenous content of the acquisitions.

The biggest beneficiary will be the Indian Air Force, which has for years sought to plug the depletion in its combat squadrons. It is now down to 30 combat squadrons, as against the sanctioned strength of 42.

"Addressing the long-felt need of the IAF to increase its fighter squadrons, the DAC also approved the proposal for procurement of 21 MiG-29s, along with upgradation of existing 59 MiG-29 aircraft and procurement of 12 Su-30 MKI aircraft," the ministry said.

Despite DAC approval, these products will take at least 2-3 years for delivery. The government also needs to be prepared for big capital expenditure as the MiG-29 procurement and upgradation from Russia is estimated to cost ₹7,418 crore, while the Su-30 MKI will be procured from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) at an estimated cost of ₹10,730 crore.

The acquisitions will add to the combat capabilities of the IAF, said Air Vice Marshal Manmohan Bahadur, Additional Director General, Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi. "These are to make up for the depleted squadrons of combat aircraft. The stand-off with China might have expedited the decisions to accept the necessity but what is important is finances need to be made available now," he said.

Among the products developed through DRDO support are Pinaka ammunitions, BMP armament upgrades and software defined radios for the Army, Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile Systems and Astra Missiles for the Navy and IAF P7

Made in India focus

The thrust of the approvals was on indigenous design and development with participation of several MSMEs as prime tier vendors. A large number of these projects were developed after transfer of technology by DRDO

MORE FIREPOWER

₹38,900 cr
Total size of the projects approved by the Defence Acquisition Council

₹31,130 cr
Of them to be sourced from Indian industry

80%
Of the project cost of some products has indigenous content

21 MiG-29
Fighter jets to be procured from Russia

59 MiG-29s
In IAF fleet to be upgraded

12 Su-30 MKI
Aircraft will be bought from HAL

248 ASTRA
Beyond Visual Range air-to-air missile systems get nod. 2 more missile systems to be procured

'Expedite steps for de-escalation'

PUSHKAR BANAKAR @ New Delhi

MAINTAINING pressure on China to walk the talk on de-escalation from stand-off points in Eastern Ladakh and fulfil the commitments made during the June 6 Corps Commander-level meeting, India on Thursday urged it to expeditiously restore peace and tranquility along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

"The two sides will continue their meetings, both at the military and diplomatic levels, including under the framework of WMCC, in future to resolve the issues to mutual satisfaction. We expect the Chinese side to sincerely follow up and ensure the expeditious restoration of peace and tranquility in the border areas as per bilateral agreements and protocols," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Army chief General M M Naravane's scheduled visit to Ladakh on Friday has been postponed. This would have been the first high-level visit of a political leader, highlighting the sensitivity of the situation at the stand-off points.

"The Chinese have agreed to disengage troops in phases. The Defence Minister might have postponed his trip so as to wait and see if things change for good," said a source. Meanwhile, Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat will visit Ladakh on Friday. P9

KARNATAKA RECORDS
1,502
POSITIVE CASES
on Thursday, the highest single-day spike so far
TOTAL CASES
18,016
8,334
Total Recoveries
272
Total Deaths
MORE UPDATES
Bengaluru Urban sees 889 fresh cases, as district tally crosses 6,000-mark
Bengaluru DC identifies 33 acres of land to bury Covid-19 casualties
Not taking any chances, state seals border with neighbouring Tamil Nadu
Training in Covid body management given to health workers in Yadgir
FULL COVERAGE P4

CBI case could crush GVK Group as airport vertical is its holy grail

SUNITHA NATTI @ Hyderabad

IT could all come crashing for infrastructure major GVK Group and industrialist G V Krishna Reddy.

The 83-year-old Padma Bhushan awardee was caught in the CBI's crosshairs for alleged fraud, forgery, cheating and criminal misconduct.

Reddy's son and managing director G V Sanjay Reddy was also named in the FIR along with nine other companies and unnamed officials of Airports Authority of India.

The blow comes amid the father-son duo's pitched ownership battle in India's busiest airport — Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL).

GVK's subsidiary GVK Airport Developers is already the majority owner with 50.5% stake in MIAL, but the Reddys are on the edge as fellow businessman Gautam Adani is one step away from usurping 23.5% stake from MIAL's two foreign stakeholders.

Allowing Adani in simply isn't an option for Reddy as airports business is the holy grail of the GVK empire spanning six subsidiaries and 18 step-down subsidiaries.

It single-handedly contributed 90% of the holding entity GVK Power & Infrastructure's consolidated income of ₹4,098 crore in FY19. With GVK offloading its complete stake in Bangalore International Airport last year and Navi Mumbai airport still under development, MIAL is now its sole cash cow.

In contrast, GVK's many other businesses are facing challenging times and even defaulted principal and interest payments worth over ₹1,570 crore during FY18 and FY19. GVK's flagship power business has turned in repeated losses and defaulted repayments, while lenders have recalled entire credit facilities extended to some subsidiaries.

Trouble has been brewing for some time for MIAL. It found itself in the thick of a storm last year, with the MCA inspecting its books following a whistle-blower complaint alleging misappropriation of funds. Lenders conducted a forensic audit of the holding entity, but found no deviations, a senior official said. CONTINUED ON: P13

TNIE IMPACT

'Lake Man' gets lifetime free bus pass

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @Bengaluru

THE Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has issued a lifetime free bus pass to 84-year-old Kaamegowda who has constructed 16 ponds at his village in Malavalli taluk. Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa directed the KSRTC to issue the pass to Gowda after *The New Indian Express* on Thursday carried the report, "All I want is a free bus pass: Lake Man", highlighting Gowda's work and his desire to get a free bus pass.

"Kaamegowda's unique environmental concerns and achievements were cited by the Prime Minister, during his 'Mann Ki Baat' programme. The CM too appreciated his exemplary achievement and directed us to issue free bus pass to Kaamegowda. His contribution is immense, wonderful and replicatory," KSRTC Managing Director Shivayogi Kalasad said.

"We have issued the Lifetime free bus pass for "Man of Lakes" Kaamegowda, to travel in all classes of service of KSRTC buses," he added.

When informed about this, Gowda said he was happy and he would like to visit Male Madeshwara and Kengal Hanumanthaiah temples which are located near his village. P7

A NEW BEGINNING

Three months after being appointed as Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee president, D K Shivakumar formally took charge in Bengaluru on Thursday. Senior party colleagues Dinesh Gundurao, K C Venugopal, Siddaramaiah, S R Patil and Mallikarjun Kharge were present | EXPRESS | P5

Panel recommends raising quota for SCs, STs by 2 pc

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

THE Justice Nagamohan Das Commission, which was set up to look into the demand for increasing SC and ST reservation in the state, is understood to have recommended a hike in quota by about 2 per cent for the two categories in education and employment. The Commission's final report, prepared after an eight-month study, was submitted to Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Thursday.

If accepted by the government, the overall reservation will exceed the 50 per cent ceiling set by the Supreme Court in 1992, highly-placed sources hinted. "The report will be placed before the cabinet. It is up to the government to accept, reject or partially accept the report. It has been 28 years since the verdict and many things have changed since. In many states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Jharkhand , the SC, ST and OBC quotas have exceeded 50 per cent. A similar recommendation has been made here," the sources said.

The Commission had received 851 applications and suggestions. It had conducted 38 meetings across the state between November 2019 and June 2020 and prepared an eight-volume report.

At present, Karnataka has 15 per cent reservation for 101 Scheduled Castes, 3 per cent for 50 Scheduled Tribes and 32 per cent for Other Backward Classes (OBC), including Muslims, Christians and Jains.

CONTINUED ON: P7

Contract docs firm on stir despite pay hike

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

WITH contractual doctors in the Health and Family Welfare Department threatening to go on strike from July 8 over the delay in fulfilling their demands, the State Government on Thursday issued an order increasing their salaries from Rs 45,000 to to Rs 60,000 per month. However, with their main demand of regularisation of service not being met, they have threatened to resign.

Reacting to the government order, the doctors, in a release, said, "We are called 'frontline warriors', but if we die, there will be no one left to take care of our families. Being contractual employees in the government, our families will get no benefits. Many health personnel and doctors have succumbed to Covid-19. With us being on the frontline, our families are scared and worried about what might happen to us."

The order added, temporary doctors and dentists will be appointed at rural PHCs on contract basis till permanent doctors are appointed. They will be paid Rs 45,000 per month. P7

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike
N.R. Square, Bengaluru - 560 002

COVID-19
Precautionary Measures to be taken by General Public

- Wearing of Facial Mask to cover mouth & nose is mandatory in public places.
- Cover your face and nose with a piece of cloth or tissue while sneezing or coughing.
- Spitting, Littering, Urinating or any kind of public nuisance is banned.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use alcohol based sanitizer regularly.
- Avoid touching nose, eyes or mouth.
- Maintain a safe distance (Physical Distance) from others anywhere you go.
- Rs. 200/- as 'Fine' will be collected for not wearing Mask or Maintaining Social Distance.

If the citizens are experiencing any health problems call BBMP Tele Health Line 07447118949 and obtain doctor's advice and necessary information.

General public should compulsorily follow these guidelines and help in preventing the spread of COVID-19

M. Goutham Kumar, Mayor
Ramamohan Raju C. R., Deputy Mayor
Manjunath Raju G., Chairman, Public Health Standing Committee
B.H. Anil Kumar, IAS, Commissioner, BBMP

As is enshrined in our Constitution, to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India is the fundamental duty of every citizen of the country.